



DHSS SNAPSHOT

Volume 31, Number 5

September - October 2015

Peter Lyskowski Named as Acting Director of DHSS



*Peter Lyskowski, acting director,
Missouri Department of Health and
Senior Services*

Peter Lyskowski has accepted the role as Acting Director of the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Service. A welcome reception was held for Peter on Nov. 4.

Peter recently served as deputy chief of staff in the Office of the Governor and has served in a number of senior leadership positions in the administration, including as deputy director of DHSS from October 2010 – January 2012.

“It is an honor to be back at DHSS,” said Peter. “It is wonderful to see so many familiar faces.”

Peter wants to work to take advantage of the opportunities to deliver positive results for Missourians.

“Helping people has always been a passion of mine,” said Peter. “In my previous work and interaction with DHSS, I have always been impressed with the dedication and professionalism of employees and it really shows in their work.”

Peter was born and raised in Jefferson City. He received a bachelor of political science degree from Truman State University and a law degree from the University of Missouri – Columbia. After receiving his law degree he worked at the Missouri Attorney General’s Office where he handled workers’ compensation and consumer protection cases.

Peter is an avid sports fan of the MU Tigers, NASCAR and the St. Louis Cardinals. He also enjoys spending time with his family, hunting, woodworking and cooking items on an open flame. He lives in Jefferson City with his wife and four children.

Click here to view photos from Peter’s welcome reception.

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DHSS Says Farewell to Former DHSS Director Gail Vasterling

On October 16, the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services held a farewell reception for former Director Gail Vasterling. Gail served the department both as director and deputy director during her four-year tenure.

During her time at DHSS, Gail worked on a number of issues to improve public health, increase transparency, and improve efficiency and effectiveness. Highlights include:

- The state's Time Critical Diagnosis System was created to bring together the 911 response system, ambulance services and hospitals in a coordinated way to provide patients the right care, at the right place, in the right amount of time.
- The State Public Health Laboratory became an Ebola testing lab, testing its first Ebola sample in November 2014.
- DHSS made licensed child care facilities' most recent inspection reports available online to assist parents with selecting the child care setting that best fits their needs.

Gail valued her daily interaction with DHSS employees, and often commented about the passion and dedication demonstrated by staff. She did her utmost to recognize employee contributions and improve morale. Gail established Friday Jeans Days and encouraged staff to improve their health through participation in the Governor's 100 Missouri Miles initiative and enthusiastically supported the department's charitable campaign.

The Department's farewell reception for Gail included a presentation of gifts of remembrance, a poem by Celesta Hartgraves, and unveiling of The Top Ten Reasons Gail Left DHSS by Bret Fischer.

Effective October 19, Gail joined the Department of Mental Health's senior leadership team as general counsel.



Gail Vasterling

Additional photos of Gail Vasterling's farewell as director of the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services can be viewed at: <https://flic.kr/s/aHsko7iRfr>.





Accreditation...

Where Are We Now?

As one of the final steps of the Accreditation process, the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services underwent a site visit from the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) site reviewers on October 14 and 15. The visit serves several purposes: to verify the accuracy of the documentation that we submitted, to seek answers to questions regarding conformity with the standards and measures, and to provide an opportunity for discussion and further explanation.

The reviewers spent two days talking with staff about the documentation that was submitted, meeting with partners about their interactions with DHSS, talking to the Governing Entity about communication processes and touring the Wildwood buildings and the State Public Health Laboratory.

At the end of the visit, there was an opportunity for them to share the highlights of their visit. The site visit team had great things to say about our emergency response process, how we have been able to integrate strategic planning departmentwide, the extent of our surveillance systems including MICA and how we have been able to address workforce development, especially in our partnerships with academic institutions. Find additional information about the strategic plan initiatives and activities that have been occurring around each of the tracks of work at: <http://dhssnet/qualityimprovement/index.php> under Strategic Planning.

Finally, the site reviewers will write up a lengthy report on how well DHSS met each measure, or detail what was missing; point out areas of excellence or unique promising practices and any opportunities for improvement. The Department is expected to receive the report by the end of November. The report will then be sent to the PHAB Accreditation Board where, based on the site visit team's review, they will make a decision on whether we will become accredited immediately, or if we will need to make further improvements before receiving accreditation status.

A Mission to Improving Children's Health

The DHSS Child and Adult Care Food Program in partnership with the Bureau of Community Health and Wellness, is on a mission to improve the health of children by recognizing child care facilities as Eat Smart and/or Move Smart and providing support to facilities to achieve these goals.

Missouri Eat Smart is a set of nutrition related recommendations developed by the Department of Health and Senior Services, Bureau of Community Food and Nutrition Assistance (CFNA) that challenge child care facilities and homes, to adopt a higher standard of meal service. Through improved choices of highly nutritional foods served and a family style meal service and setting, providers and caregivers are able to facilitate a relaxed and developmental experience at mealtime.

"Children learn their habits early in life," said Elizabeth Blau, a community planner for Nutrition Programs in the Bureau of Community Food & Nutrition Assistance Programs. "Eat Smart is an excellent opportunity for children to develop healthy nutrition habits for life."

Currently, there are 140 programs recognized as Eat Smart.

Missouri MOve Smart is a program to improve the health of children through physical, mental and social development. The Missouri MOve Smart Child Care program provides a set of physical activity standards, for child care facilities to follow, that will help children reach their full potential in physical growth, health and development. The guidelines for MOve Smart address a center's policy and culture regarding physical activity, sedentary time, staff modeling of activity and screen time. There are currently 53 centers recognized as MOve Smart.

"As a society we have become more sedentary," said Pat Simmons, chief of the Bureau of Community Health and Wellness. "Obesity continues to be an issue for Missourians, so the more we encourage children to get up and move, the healthier they will grow and be more physically active in their later years of life."

For more information on Eat Smart or MOve Smart and to see a list of recognized centers, explore these websites at: www.health.mo.gov/eatsmart and www.health.mo.gov/movesmart.

Director's Award for Team Quality Improvement

The Missouri State Fair Team is the recipient of the Director's Award for Team Quality Improvement for the 3rd Quarter, 2015.

The Missouri State Fair is one of the biggest temporary food events in the state. Each year, over 120 food vendors are open for business. Each vendor is assigned a location, but these locations have not been mapped in an effective manner. DHSS staff has encountered food vendors in the past that were not inspected with the same frequency as other vendors.

To address the issue, before the start of the 2015 Missouri State Fair, the Bureau of Environmental Health Services held staff training at the fairgrounds to discuss the inspection process and physically walk the routes that would be used to inspect each facility.

One week prior to the State Fair opening, vendors were asked to attend a food safety class to explain basic food safety principles and the inspection process. After the training, vendors received an initial inspection to assure they met basic food safety requirements before they could begin serving.

After the initial inspection, vendors were inspected based on priority, which included number of meals and types of food served.

A total of 809 inspections were conducted in 2015 compared to 707 inspections in 2014. The quality improvement efforts resulted in an increased number of inspections that were conducted with the same or less number of staff conducting them. By increasing staff effectiveness, fewer staff were needed to conduct state fair activities.

Overall, the project worked well. Some actions will be standardized for future years.



Team Members:

Northwest District

Maura DeYoung
Ainsley Lackey
Wayne McGrath
Barb Sampson
Amanda Yeager

Southwest District

Thomas Bixler
Jason Cummings
Andrew Freiburger
Edith Todd
Aaron Winslow
Russell Lily

Eastern District

Jessica Campbell
Dusty Johnson
Angela Jones
Dale Lindberg
Virginia Phillips

Central District

Nancy Beyer
Heather Davenport
Ellen Dettman
Steve Hawk
Rachelle Kuster
Mark Jenkerson
Percy Johnson
Craig Sullivan

Southeast District

Paula Cates
Mallory Potter
Ann Winkler

Flu Season Is Here



Peter Lyskowski, acting director, received the flu vaccine at the Betty Jean Kerr People's Health Centers in St. Louis.

Over 400 Department of Health and Senior Services employees took advantage of the flu vaccine clinics coordinated by the Bureau of Immunization Assessment and Assurance. (Bottom, l. to r.) Lindsey Luebbering, Division of Senior and Disability Services; Brian Bishop, Division of Administration; Kristen Edwards, Division of Regulation and Licensure and Lynelle Paro registering staff to receive the flu vaccine.

[Click here for additional photos.](#)

Don't forget to add a flu shot to your "to do" list. Flu season is here and if you haven't already, now is the time to make sure your family is protected from influenza and the serious complications that can accompany it.

"This season's vaccines have been updated to better match circulating viruses," said Peter Lyskowski, acting director. "Getting a flu vaccine is the best way to protect against the flu."

Annual vaccination against flu is recommended for all people six months of age and older, unless they have a condition or medical reason not to get the vaccine. It is especially important for young children, pregnant women, older people and people with chronic health problems.

Spread of the flu

The flu can be easily spread from person to person by coughing, sneezing and touching surfaces or objects contaminated by the flu virus then touching the mouth, eyes and/or nose. People are able to spread the flu to others, one day before symptoms develop. This is why vaccination is the best prevention.

"Washing your hands is also a critical part of preventing the spread of the flu," said Peter.

Symptoms include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Some people may experience vomiting and diarrhea.

Peter added that the flu vaccine cannot give you the flu. Flu vaccines contain killed or weakened viruses that cannot cause illness. If someone experiences flu-like symptoms soon after getting vaccinated, it can mean that person was exposed to the flu or a flu-like illness before being vaccinated. It takes about two weeks after vaccination for protection to set in, making now the perfect time to get vaccinated.

To find a flu vaccine clinic near you or for more information about seasonal flu, go to: www.health.mo.gov/living/healthcondiseases/communicable/influenza/.



The Process of Handling Millions of Dollars

Q. *Do you know how much money the department received by cash or check last year?*

A. The answer may surprise you—\$59.9 million.

All of that money was processed by the Division of Administration Fee Receipts Unit, which receives money through the mail and from walk-in customers. The department receives money for a variety of reasons such as lab testing fees, birth and death certificates, background checks, licenses and student loan payments. The Fee Receipts Unit receives a large volume of mail each day since all money sent to the department must go directly to the Fee Receipts Unit.

Each day staff:

- Open and sort daily Fee Receipts mail;
- Scan checks and money orders;
- Enter applicable program coding for each transaction;
- Transmit the deposit electronically to the bank;
- Record the deposit in the SAM II financial system; and
- Send transaction reports and supporting documentation to the program.

The department also receives money by Automated Clearing House (ACH) or direct deposit. Last year the department received over \$918 million by ACH, most of which came from the federal government. The money received by the department makes our operations possible as we strive to fulfill our vision of "Healthy Missourians for Life."



The Fee Receipts Unit consists of Kimberly Moss (standing), Kayla Keppler (left) and Sarah Moeller (right).

Public Health in Action!

As part of the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services' commitment, to "maintain a workforce composed of highly skilled and motivated individuals..." the Center for Local Public Health and the Missouri Council for Public Health Nursing (MCPHN) sponsor a Regional Public Health Nurses' Training at the State Public Health Laboratory annually. Each year, Drew Pratt educates Missouri's public health nurses on that year's communicable disease, which in 2015 was measles. Over 50 public health nurses attended from across the state to learn more about their role in keeping "Healthy Missourians for Life."

Other DHSS staff that presented at the training included: Lana Hudanick on Vaccines for Children and measles; and Margaret Buckland on lead and the local public health role. Two additional training topics included Trauma Awareness presented by the Missouri Department of Mental Health and the Missouri Eligibility Determination and Enrollment System update on pregnancy enrollment presented by the Missouri Department of Social Services.



Drew Pratt educates public health nurses about measles.

If you have a suggestion for showing **public health in action**, please email Lori.Buchanan@health.mo.gov. Suggestions could include field work, inspections, special trainings or health promotion. Articles and photos are subject to the Director's Office approval.

Missouri Honors Best Older Workers

by Charisse Pappas, Division of Senior and Disability Services

The vote is in for Missouri's top 10 older workers. Among them are a newspaper editor and general manager, and a public administrator who treats the people in her care like family, inviting them to cookouts at her home and ensuring each gets a birthday cake on their special day.

Former Department of Health and Senior Services Director Gail Vasterling and other dignitaries presented awards to the winners at a two-day ceremony in Jefferson City's Capitol Plaza Hotel Sept. 22 and Sept. 23. All of the winners are 60 or older.

"Older workers receive high marks for loyalty and reliability," said Gail. "They also score high in leadership, detail-oriented tasks, organization, listening, writing skills and problem solving."

The 25th annual Older Worker contest is sponsored by the Missouri Senior Employment Coordinating Committee, consisting of Experience Works, Inc.; Catholic Charities of Kansas City-St. Joseph; MERS/Missouri Goodwill Industries; and the Department of Health and Senior Services.



DHSS Receives ASTHO Vision Award

The Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO) Vision Award recognizes outstanding state and territorial health agency programs and initiatives that use a creative approach to address public health needs or problems. Dr. George Turabelidze, Missouri State Epidemiologist, and Gail Vasterling, former DHSS Director, accepted this prestigious award during the recent 2015 annual ASTHO meeting in Salt Lake City, UT. DHSS received the Vision Award for the development of a Disease Electronic Surveillance with Trigonometric Models (DESTEM) analytical system. Missouri DHSS was one of only four awardees selected from dozens of applicants across the nation.



Dr. George Turabelidze, Missouri State Epidemiologist, and Gail Vasterling, former DHSS Director, accept the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO) Vision Award.

DESTEM's statistical approach to the surveillance data analysis is different from other statistical algorithms currently in use. DESTEM employs Poisson distribution whose mean is allowed to vary depending on the week of the year, and the disease seasonality is modeled by a trigonometric function whose parameters can be estimated by the baseline set of data. The approach of DESTEM is particularly innovative in its interactivity with the user. Unlike a static report, this interactive approach to surveillance analysis gives the epidemiologist ability to perform more in depth analysis, enabling him or her to make better informed decisions. DESTEM allows analysis of epidemiologically diverse diseases (about 50 reportable diseases are routinely monitored by DHSS) within a single surveillance tool. DESTEM weekly surveillance reports produce clear alerts, and the report is easily understood by professionals as well as the general public.

Currently, DESTEM continues to be enhanced as additional capabilities are added to the system. It is anticipated that this surveillance tool will be deployed across the state in 2016 after the transition from R to SAS statistical software environment is completed.

An article entitled "Trigonometric Regression for Analysis of Public Health Surveillance Data" detailing DESTEM methodology has been published by S Rigdon, G Turabelidze and E Jahanpour in the November, 2014 issue of the Journal of Applied Mathematics. View the article at: <http://www.hindawi.com/journals/jam/2014/673293/>.

Welcome New Employees



Top: New employees who attended the New Employee Training offered by the Office of Human Resources on September 29-30.

Bottom: New employees from the October 26-27 training.

To view a listing of new hires click on the [Personnel Action Report](#) on the intranet under Employee Information.





Star Performance

Luke,
Last week I received a phone call from Ms. Powell who stated you had just left her home and she wanted to compliment you on your “professionalism.” She added “he was personal, efficient and did his job getting all the information he needed.”

Luke, I want to add that I also appreciate the hard work you do on a daily basis. You have a great attitude and quickly build rapport with the participants you serve. Thank you for all the great work you do day in and day out. I am proud to have you on my team!

Sharon Hamlet
HCS Field Assessor Supervisor



Luke Waweru, adult protective and community worker/assessor, Jasper County, Region 1, Division of Senior and Disability Services

“ He was personal, efficient and did his job getting all of the information he needed. ”

To Whom It May Concern,
I wanted to pass along my thanks for DHSS’ rapid response to our request to have a filming and podcast at the July MoCAN meeting. Larry Thomas did an excellent job. I specifically appreciated Larry’s kind manner in talking with our awardee and I thought that the podcast itself turned out great. I really liked the mix that he did of photos from the programs and his direct interviewing of the awardee.

Thank you,
Sarah Hampl, MD
General Pediatrician, Weight Management
Children’s Mercy Hospitals and Clinics



Larry Thomas, video production specialist, Office of Public Information

“ Larry Thomas did an excellent job. I specifically appreciated Larry’s kind manner in talking with our awardee and I thought that the podcast itself turned out great. ”

Charitable Campaign Comes to a Close

It was another prosperous year for the Missouri State Charitable Campaign. Over \$63,974.22 was raised through pledge cards, Buddy Pack, Penny Wars, silent auction, balloon grams and jeans day. In addition, staff donated 285 lbs of food and 60 backpacks for the “Buddy Pack” program. The Division of Community Public Health were reigned champions of the Penny Wars which totalled \$466.37 between the divisions.

The Special Learning Center provided entertainment during the campaign kickoff. DHSS staff had the chance to listen to presentations presented by representatives from several area charities and visit exhibit booths to gain further information about the charities represented.

“The Charitable Campaign is a great way to raise money for charities while having a little fun and friendly competition,” said Stacy Kempker, this year’s charitable campaign coordinator. “Thank you to everyone who helped make this year’s Campaign a success.”



The Special Learning Center was the guest entertainment during the Charitable Campaign kickoff.



Division Committee Representatives

Back row, l. to r., Kayla Curry, Beth Hoerschgen, Tammy Maasen, Wendy Bruemmer, Debi Siebert, Stacy Kempker and Pam Fisher.

Front row, l. to r., Lorraine Tappel and Kathleen Gregory.

DHSS staff donated 285 lbs of food and 60 backpacks and raised \$354 for the “Buddy Pack” program.

HR Corner

Staff in the Office of Human Resources recently attended an informational meeting with the Department of Insurance, Financial Institutions and Professional Registration (DIFP). DIFP staff provides education while you are shopping for insurance, reviewing your insurance policies, or during a natural disaster. They also help you when you file a complaint on one of their covered entities. For more tips about how DIFP can help you with insurance questions and needs, go to: <http://dhssnet/employeeinfo/pdf/difp-insurance-info.pdf>.

In Memory

George Lauer of the Information Technology Services Division (ITSD) passed away on September 13. George was known for his generosity and support of the U.S. military. In 2003, George and his wife, Janice, began shipping homemade goodies, cards, hygiene items and a variety of other items to soldiers deployed in Iraq. After that shipment, George was devoted to making sure soldiers deployed overseas and who had relatives employed at DHSS or ITSD received items throughout the year to share with family and fellow soldiers.

In a Snapshot article highlighting George's efforts in 2010, George said, "It is wonderful to receive so much support from fellow coworkers. These gifts are small acts of kindness, but will bring smiles to many soldiers beyond those directly receiving the packages. Often the homemade treats are shared with other soldiers and the Christmas trees are placed in foyers, mess halls or other gathering locations."

According to friends and family, George requested to have members of the armed forces, who received one of his care packages, serve as his pallbearers. His request came true with the help of the News Tribune who ran an article on George's generosity and request. [Click here to view the article.](#)

George served in the U.S. Army in Vietnam. He is survived by his wife, Janice; son, Mark Lauer; and sisters, Wanda Goll and Estelle Ball.

[Click here to view George's obituary.](#)

George Lauer liked to wear red on Fridays to remember the sacrifice our soldiers have given. He would ask others to do likewise. George loved to share information and tell stories. Janice and Mark Lauer came to 920 Wildwood and brought us lunch. We shared in a time of fellowship, we laughed and we cried. Mark shared that George kept a journal; George would record conversations with everyone he had. George wanted to connect with people. When George had a relationship with someone it was never a surface relationship. He wanted to know what was going on in your life and follow up every chance he could. I now know why he could remember in detail what was going on with me (my family & life). Mark told me George wrote in his journal what he knew was important to me (my daughter's wedding plans & the cutting of wine bottles, decorations, etc.). George Lauer was a joy to work with, he did not need supervision, and he will be missed. I will miss our morning conversations before work. Janice and Mark now cope and adjust to a life without George, please keep them in your thoughts and prayers. Thank you.

George's friend, co-worker & supervisor

Mark Mantle



George Lauer (second from the left) and coworkers from DHSS and ITSD shipped 10 6.5 ft pre-lit Christmas trees; 10 large boxes of ornaments and decorations; and 24 priority boxes filled with goodies and hygiene products in November 2010 to soldiers deployed overseas.



DHSS Employees of the Month



Sybil Schlater

Sybil Schlater has been selected as the Department's September Employee of the Month. Sybil is a management analyst specialist with the Bureau of WIC and Nutrition Services.

Sybil expertly manages everything from estimating WIC monthly caseload to bidding millions of dollars in contracts. Sybil demonstrates exemplary knowledge of policies that enrich her contract writing and processing responsibilities. She successfully manages the increased federal funding and the two fold increase in contract bids. She assures the program is appropriately informed about changes in policies and processes affecting the work of the program. She proactively researches the latest requirements for contract bids in order to assure swift processing and bidding of contracts.

Sybil has never met a problem that she could not resolve, which places her one giant step above acceptable. Her positive attitude results in staff seeking her out to be on work groups, to be a sounding board for new projects and to identify Invoicing Application issues. Recently, check printing issues prevented some WIC checks from being processed by the bank. Sybil took it upon herself to read the 4 printer manuals to identify possible causes of the error. She is always willing to test the fixes to the Invoicing Application even during the evening or over the weekend. She thoroughly reviews tests and samples until she is satisfied with the "fix." She accomplishes so much by using her pleasant "can-do" attitude with staff inside and outside the bureau.



Kathy Mertzlufft

Kathy Mertzlufft was nominated as the Department's October Employee of the Month. Kathy is a nutrition specialist with the Bureau of WIC and Nutrition Services.

Kathy is a registered dietitian and International Board Certified Lactation Consultant. She has been in the role as the State Breastfeeding Coordinator for 2 ½ years and has previously worked for the Columbia/Boone County WIC program. She is responsible for most breastfeeding activities at the state level including WIC breastfeeding budget allocation, policy development, maintaining a supply of breastpumps for the local WIC providers, breastfeeding training to state/local WIC agency staff and hospital nursing staff, providing technical assistance to local WIC providers as well as assisting moms when they have breastfeeding difficulties.

Her nominator wrote, "Missouri has been recognized as a state that has greatly improved breastfeeding rates thanks to Kathy."

Kathy and her husband are getting ready to celebrate their 30 year wedding anniversary and have an adult son who is a middle school math teacher. They are huge Missouri Tiger fans and don't miss a Mizzou football or basketball game. Kathy also likes to cycle, waterski, snow ski and work in her garden.

The DHSS Snapshot is published by the Office of Public Information.

Suggestions for future articles can be sent to: Lori.Buchanan@health.mo.gov ● phone: 573/751-6062

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